

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The claims are 51-89 with claims 90-100 having been withdrawn by the Examiner from consideration as directed to a non-elected invention. Claim 51 has been amended to change a reference numeral. Claims 59, 60 and 78 have been amended to depend on claims 58, 53 and 60, respectively, and claims 53, 64, 67, 71, 74, 79, 81-84 and 86 have been amended to improve their form. Reconsideration is expressly requested.

Claims 64, 67, 71, 74, 78, 79, 81-84 and 86 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for the reasons set forth on pages 3-5 of the Office Action. In response, Applicants have amended claims 53, 64, 67, 71, 74, 79, 81-84 and 86 to improve their form, have amended claims 59, 60 and 78 to depend on claims 58, 53 and 60, respectively, and have amended claim 51 to correct a reference numeral. It is respectfully submitted that the foregoing amendments overcomes the Examiner's rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, and Applicants respectfully request that the rejection on that basis be withdrawn.

Claims 51-58, 60-63, 65, 67-68, 70-79, 80-84 and 87-89 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by *Kensrue U.S. Patent No. 4,954,690*. The remaining claims under consideration were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Kensrue* in view of *Fox U.S. Patent No. 4,937,417* (claims 59 and 64), *Hudson et al. U.S. Patent No. 2,808,498* (claim 66), *Huismann et al. U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0016788* (claims 69 and 86), or what the Examiner calls Applicant Admitted Prior Art at page 16, line 8 of the specification (claim 85). Essentially the Examiner's position was that *Kensrue* discloses the welding torch recited in the claims, except for features which were considered either within the skill of the art or taught by the secondary references to *Fox*, *Hudson et al.*, *Huismann et al.*, and "Applicant Admitted Prior Art."

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As set forth in claim 51 as amended, Applicants' invention provides a welding torch including a welding housing wherein a

drive unit formed by at least one drive roller and one pressure roller as well as a drive motor is arranged in the torch housing for feeding a welding wire. A part of the torch housing is designed as a stator housing of the drive motor of the drive unit. Bearings are provided on the torch housing to stabilize and position a rotor of the drive motor. In this way, Applicants' invention provides a welding torch which permits the reduction of manufacturing tolerances between the position of the motor shaft and the welding wire feed axis due to the bearing site being located directly on the torch housing or base body, with the only manufacturing tolerance occurring when mounting the bearings within the torch housing.

None of the cited references discloses or suggests a welding torch in which a part of the torch housing of the welding torch is designed as a stator housing of the drive motor for feeding the welding wire as recited in Applicants' claim 51 as amended. The primary reference to *Kensrue*, which was also cited in the International Search Report of the International application on which this application is based as the closest state of the art,

describes a welding torch (10), with a torch housing (20), a drive roller (54) and an idle roller (52) and a motor (16) for feeding a welding wire (40). The motor (16) according to *Kensrue* is an independent unit being arranged within the casing (20) of the welding torch (10). As can be seen from column 3, lines 38 and 39 of *Kensrue*, the plastic casing (20) "encloses the block and motor when these components are assembled." The stator housing of the motor (16) according to *Kensrue* is not a part of the torch housing as recited in Applicants' claim 51 as amended. This situation has been correctly identified by the Examiner in the International Preliminary Report on Patentability of the International application which reads,

"b) The subject matter of claim 1 differs in that part of the torch housing (28) is designed as a stator housing of the drive motor (33) of the drive unit (30), and in that bearings (43, 44) for stabilizing and positioning a rotor (45) of the drive motor (33) are provided on the torch housing (28)."

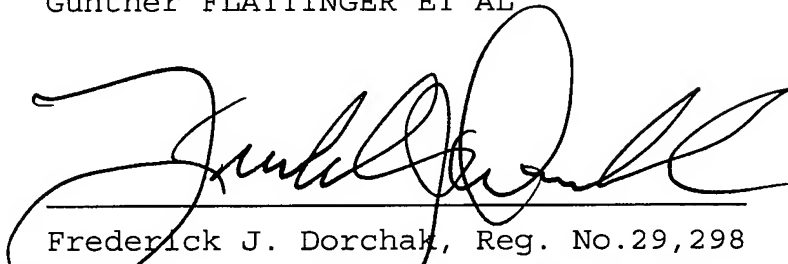
"c) A welding torch of compact type of construction is therefore proposed which permits improved cooling."

The defects and deficiencies to the primary reference to *Kensrue* are nowhere remedied by the secondary references to *Fox*, *Hudson et al.*, *Huismann et al.* or what the Examiner calls Applicant Admitted Prior Art at page 16, line 8 of the specification. None of these references or what has been purportedly admitted discloses or suggests a welding torch having the structure recited in claim 51 as amended, wherein a part of the torch housing is designed as a stator housing of the drive motor of the drive unit.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 51 as amended, together with claims 52-89 which depend directly or indirectly thereon, are patentable over the cited references.

In summary, claims 51, 53, 59, 60, 64, 67, 71, 74, 78, 79, 81-84 and 86 have been amended. In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the claims be allowed and that this application be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,
Gunther FLATTINGER ET AL



COLLARD & ROE, P.C.
1077 Northern Boulevard
Roslyn, New York 11576
(516) 365-9802

Frederick J. Dorchak, Reg. No.29,298
Edward R. Freedman, Reg. No.26,048
Attorneys for Applicants

FJD:cmm

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Amy Klein

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